

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 OMB-01 /065 W
-----053676 280157Z /75
R 271420Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 861

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINR, PGOV, DM
SUBJ: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTORAL PROCEDURES

REF COTONOU 702

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN (GPRB) IS CONTINUING TO PRESS AHEAD WITH ELECTION PLANS FOR THE "COMMISSAIRES" OF THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY ASSEMBLY. IN A RECENTLY PUBLISHED DECREE IN THE SEMI-OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER, EHUZU, THE GOV'T OUTLINED PROCEDURES FOR THE NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES. ACCORDING TO THE DECREE, NOMINATIONS FOR EACH VILLAGE WILL BE REVIEWED AT THE GENERAL MEETING OF ALL VILLAGERS. THEY WILL SELECT, BY SECRET BALLOT, CANDIDATES TO REPRESENT THE VILLAGE AT THE COMMUNE LEVEL; THEN, AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL THREE FINAL CANDIDATES WILL BE SELECTED FOR EACH AVAILABLE SEAT IN THE DISTRICT. PROCEDURES FOR THE ELECTION OF COMMIS- SAIRES ALLOTTED TO THE BOURGEOISIE, LABOR, AND OTHER ORGANIZ- ATIONS ARE ROUGHLY SIMILAR TO THOSE FOR THE VILLAGERS.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE NEW NOMINATION PROCECURES CARRY A SURFACE APPEARANCE OF DEMOCRACY, A SMALL PARAGRAPH IN THE DECREE RESERVES TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE OFFICIAL "PARTI DE LA REVOLUTION POPULAIRE DU BENIN" THE RIGHT TO
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SET THE IRITERIA WHICH ANY CITIZEN MUST FULFILL IN ORDER TO BE AN ACCEPTABLE CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE. THUS, THE KEREKOU REGIME, WHICH HAS SHOWN NO EVIDENCE OF A STERLING COMMIT- MENT TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE PAST, HAS ESTABLISHED THIS MEANS TO CONTROL THE NEW ELECTION SYSTEM FROM THE OUTSET. AS NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE ELECTIONS, THE LATEST DECREE APPEARS TO BE A MEANS OF PLACATING THE CIVILIAN IDEOLOGUES

WHO SEEK TO REPLACE THE MILITARY, WHILE PERMITTING THE MILITARY
CABINET TO CONTINUE TO RULE THE COUNTRY IN THE NAME OF THE
REVOLUTION AND THE PEOPLE. THOMPSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978COTON000926
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780266-1194
Format: TEL
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780617/aaaaaov.tel
Line Count: 65
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2e2a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 COTONOU 702
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2198649
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTORAL PROCEDURES
TAGS: PINT, PINR, PGOV, DM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2e2a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014